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RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7174
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 0474
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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q MIDDLE EAST/NORTH KOREA
- TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Most Thursday morning papers front-paged the planned submission by China and Russia of their version of a UNSC draft resolution on North Korea's missile launches.

1. "Japan Should Make Its Presence Felt in Middle East Diplomacy" The business-oriented Nihon Keizai editorialized (7/13): "Ahead of the upcoming G-8 summit, Prime Minister Koizumi visited the Middle East and met Wednesday with Israeli Prime Minister Olmert. Koizumi's visit to the region comes at a time of growing tension, as Israel has continued to undertake military operations in the Palestinian territories since late last month. It is the first time in 11 years for a Japanese prime minister to visit to Israel and the Palestinian territories. We commend Koizumi for urging the two sides to exercise self-restraint and trying to find an opportunity to restore peace.

2. "This summit diplomacy could be quite significant if it enables Japan to make its presence felt in the Middle East.... The role that Japan should play first in the Middle East peace process is trying to maintain balance in the international reaction to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and making clear Japan's position to both sides. It is a matter of course for Japan to urge Palestinian radicals to refrain from such provocative actions as firing rockets into Israel and abducting Israeli soldiers, measures they claim are 'defensive.'... Japan is a major provider of aid for the Palestinians, and the US and Israel have praised Tokyo's continued financial and economic assistance for them."

3. "UNSC Resolution: Delay in Adoption Would Feed North

Korea's Arrogance" An editorial in the top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri commented (7/13): "A further delay in the UNSC's adoption of a resolution on the North Korean missile launches will only feed Pyongyang's arrogance. The international community must quickly take a firm stance and show North Korea that it will not accept missile launches conducted in defiance of global calls for a suspension. Japan and seven other nations submitted a draft resolution to the UNSC calling for sanctions on the DPRK. A vote has been put off, though, while China, which opposes the resolution, is trying to persuade North Korea to return to the six-party talks.

¶4. "For the time being, Japan can only wait and see how the Chinese diplomatic bid unfolds, but that time is not without limit. Should the UNSC be unable to quickly take unified action, North Korea will not take the international community seriously and will step up efforts to develop nuclear weapons and missiles. The resolution submitted by Japan and other nations would apply strong pressure on Pyongyang. It would obligate North Korea not only to bring an immediate halt to the development, testing, deployment, and proliferation of missiles but also put a freeze on launches. It would also be called upon to return to the six-party talks unconditionally.... China, which is a permanent member of the UNSC, offered a nonbinding chairman's statement as a counterproposal. Beijing's draft neither recognizes the North Korean missile launches as a 'threat' nor refers to Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which provides the legal basis for the imposition of sanctions. This would not affect North Korea in the slightest."

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SCHIEFFER